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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/514,759	02/28/2000	John Vivian Wood	SWIN 2012	9358

7812 7590 02/13/2004

SMITH-HILL AND BEDELL
12670 N W BARNES ROAD
SUITE 104
PORTLAND, OR 97229

EXAMINER

THALER, MICHAEL H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3731

15

DATE MAILED: 02/13/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Applicati n No.

09/514,759

Applicant(s)

WOOD ET AL.

Examiner

Michael Thaler

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 January 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-52 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 48-52 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 15-47 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

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Claims 48-52 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP 821.03.

Claims 15-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bendel et al. (5,242,458). Bendel et al. show a biocompatible gripping device for surgical use including at least one deformable gripping element (at I) comprising shape memory material (col. 3, lines 55-63). The amount of functional porosity of the material is not disclosed in the reference. However, it would have been obvious that there exists at least a very small amount of functional porosity in the Bendel et al. material since materials in general are porous to some degree (even if it is a very small degree) and the amount of functional porosity is not claimed. The deformable gripping element (at I) can, in fact, be returned to its non-deformed condition on heating after releasing the article, as broadly claimed. During its intended use, the gripping element I returns to its non-deformed condition after releasing the article as indicated in col. 3, lines 61-63. However, the gripping element, when used in a cold environment (below the martensite to austenite phase transition temperature) would inherently remain in its deformed condition after releasing the article since it would be in the martensite phase. Further, it would inherently return to its

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non-deformed condition upon heating (to room temperature for example) since heating it would change its state from the martensite to austenite. Since the rejected claims are apparatus claims rather than method of use claims and since the Bendel et al. device is inherently capable of being used as claimed, the rejection is proper.

Claims 15-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bendel et al. (5,242,458) in view of Davis (4,839,479). Assuming arguendo that the material of the Bendel et al. inserts I has absolutely no functional porosity, it would have been obvious to provide such porosity to the material in order to enhance the speed of recovery of the insert after deformation in view of the Davis teaching of making shape memory materials porous for this reason (col. 6, lines 40-63).

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Applicant's arguments filed Jan. 13, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive for the reasons set forth above.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this

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action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Thaler whose telephone number is (703) 308-2981. The examiner can normally be reached Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael J. Milano can be reached on (703)308-2496. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703)872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0858.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Thaler', written in a cursive style.

MICHAEL THALER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
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